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DD CHELLIAH

Man of Faith, Master Teacher



Leana Tambyah

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my parents,
Ven Dr D D Chelliah and Mrs Rosalind Chelliah,
with my love and in thanksgiving for theirs.



*“Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that
is within me bless his holy name.”*

Psalm 103:1

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For
John and our children,
grandchildren and their children's children.



*“The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious
unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,
and give thee peace.”*

Numbers 6:24-26

*“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.
Praise ye the Lord.”*

Psalm 150:6

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THE WAR AND THE CATHEDRAL

“Be still, and know that I am God...”
Psalm 46:10

By the time of our arrival in Singapore, the spectre of war in South East Asia was very much on the horizon. However, the British in Singapore were not fully prepared to be overcome by an Asian force. Volunteers were trained for emergencies and some buildings like St Andrew’s School and the Cathay Cinema were requisitioned. The school became the centre for the Medical Auxiliary Service (MAS). Eventually, when Penang fell, some evacuees from there were housed in St Andrew’s School. With the fall of Singapore, these people were sent to the Cathay building because it was thought to be a safer place than the school. St Andrew’s School later became a Japanese storage depot and Australian and Indian prisoners of war worked there. It was also a food distribution centre for the area.

My Father, on his journey to England in August 1939, had already experienced the start of the war in Europe. He was very much aware of the futility and tragedy of war. On Sunday, 23 February 1941, the Sunday before the start of Lent, he had preached a sermon at Holy Trinity (Foochow, Chinese) Church on the text, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” (Luke 18:41)

He spoke of the great faith of the poor, blind beggar, Bartimaeus, shown in the persistency of his cry for mercy and his refusal to be silenced by the crowd. Our Lord, with His characteristic care for

the individual, humble though he may be, reacted very differently from the crowd. He halted the whole procession as it proceeded towards Jerusalem, for the sake of this wayside beggar and commanded that he be brought to Him. When the blind man was asked by our Lord what he wanted, he had no hesitation in answering because he knew exactly what was wrong with him and what was wanted to remedy it. He received his sight through his great faith and followed our Lord, glorifying God. At that moment, not only was his physical sight restored, his spiritual vision, with regard to our Lord, was also clearer than that of His disciples.

Likening the physical blindness of Bartimaeus to our spiritual blindness, my Father said:

DDC: “If our eyes are opened we shall see more clearly than before, what He can and will do for us. The world is passing through an unprecedented crisis. We see the forces of evil let loose all around us. People of all sorts and conditions are forced to leave their homes and countries and become refugees. They are surrounded by enemies of all sorts, who strike terror within their hearts. Most of them feel so lonely, desolate and sad through this loss of their loved ones in whom they had placed so much hope. Whatever may be the trouble or sorrow we are experiencing, if our eyes are opened, we shall realize firstly, that God provides for us and supplies all our needs, both material and spiritual; secondly, that God protects us

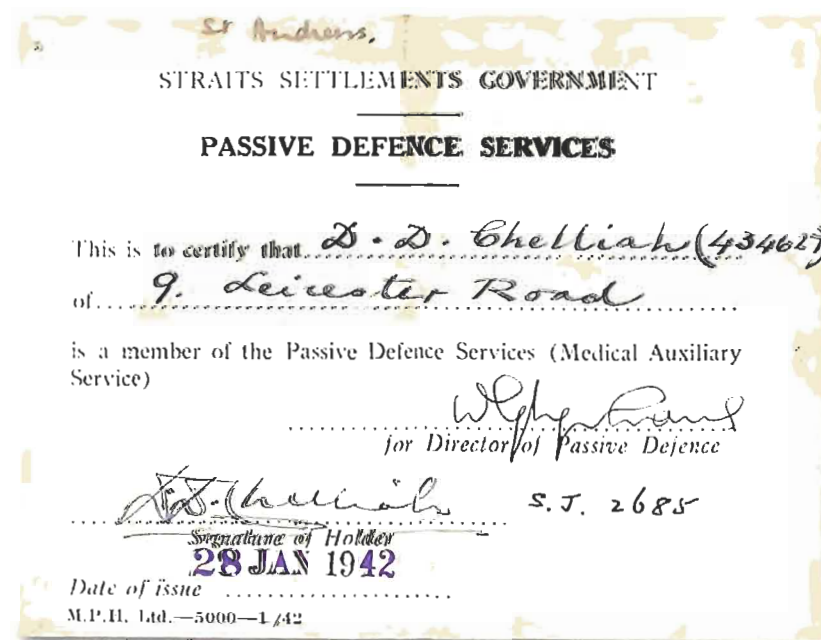
from seen and unseen, known and unknown enemies; and thirdly, that God is present with us, feels for us and explains away this apparent and temporary loss of our loved ones. God's Providence, His Protection and His Presence with us in this time of our difficulties, troubles, stress and sorrow, can be illustrated by various incidents in the Bible."

Father then went on to elaborate on God's Providence for Hagar and Ishmael, His Protection of Elisha and His Presence with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus on the third day after our Lord's crucifixion. God heard the cry of Ishmael as he thirsted and saw the grief of his mother. He opened the mother's eyes so that she saw a well full of water nearby and their thirst was quenched. When the King of Syria heard that Elisha was responsible for frustrating his plans, he sent a great host in chariots to capture Elisha. Elisha's servant became very jittery but in answer to Elisha's prayer, God opened the eyes of the young man and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. In other words, when his eyes were opened, he saw the means of God's protection of Elisha. Our Lord's Pres-

ence with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus became apparent when their eyes were opened, as our Lord gave thanks when He broke bread with them.

Dad drew the attention of the congregation to the fact that God's protection is not only for individuals but for nations as well. He reminded them of the extraordinary and remarkable escape that the British Expeditionary Force had had at Dunkirk. It was apparently partly due to an unseasonal fog. The hand of God was plain to see in the miracle of Dunkirk. Often without our knowing it, God is continually protecting us from both physical and spiritual danger.

When my parents had arrived in England to present my Father's thesis for his Doctorate, the war had already broken out in Europe. Thus, they had had personal experience of the devastation and tragedy that are the consequences of war. Dad used that experience to encourage and equip the congregation at Holy Trinity to face the inevitable war that would reach Asia before the end of the year. He reminded them of Christ's enduring promise, "...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20)



Membership card for a volunteer in the Passive Defence Services and the Medical Auxiliary Services (MAS).

My Father was the Headmaster and Senior Mathematics master at St Andrew's School and an Honorary Priest of St Andrew's Cathedral at the outbreak of the war in this part of the world. Though he was junior as a priest, Bishop John Leonard Wilson, who was the Bishop of the Anglican church at that time, was very much aware of Dad's numerous years in the mission field, his positive approach to ecumenism, his capabilities as an administrator and his brilliance as a teacher. He appointed my Father as Acting Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral on his eventual internment in March 1943. Bishop Wilson, too, was a believer in ecumenism and supported with enthusiasm the directive of the Japanese Department of Religion that all Christian churches should work together.

In August 1973, Dad was interviewed by Ms Lim Yoon Lin of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), on his recollections of the Japanese Occupation. Some of the details mentioned above, as well as the following, are based on extracts from that interview, with the kind permission of Miss Ch'ng Kim See, Head ISEAS Library.

DC: Just before the fall of Singapore, Bishop Wilson had made arrangements for the administration of the diocese. I was ordained only in September the year before. Nevertheless, he made me his deputy during his internment. He came back on parole with two other priests, having managed to persuade the Japanese that it was very important for him to continue to be in charge of his work.

Before his ultimate internment, he had planned and sent out notices that I should be his Deputy while he was away. At a meeting of the clergy, he made an

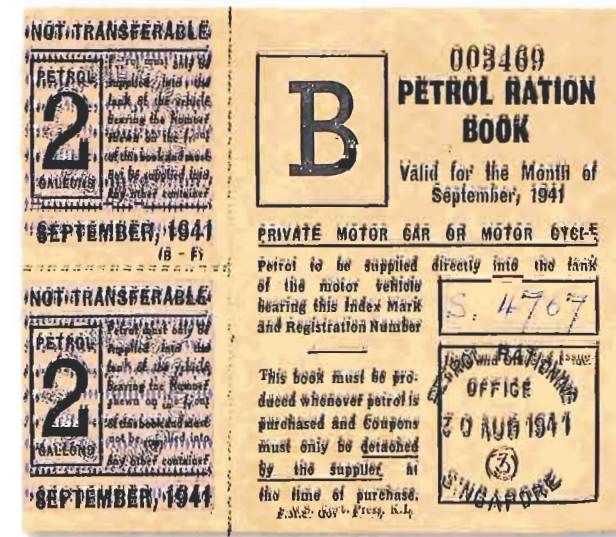
announcement and gave me the paper appointing me his deputy — Acting Dean of the Cathedral. Even though I was about 50 years old at the time, I was not old in service in the ministry. Some of the older people were not happy about it but there was no open opposition. Some Anglicans were concerned that I was the Bishop's sole deputy. They feared that there would be no one in a position of responsibility should anything happen to me. Moreover, they also felt that if any undue pressure were put upon the one person, all the other divisions would

suffer. I indicated to him that I would not like to be in sole charge of the diocese.

My brother Jonathan vividly recalls that shortly before his internment, Bishop Wilson came to our home. Before even entering the house, he stood at the gate between the two frangipani trees, where Dad had come out to meet him, and he told Dad that he

had decided to appoint him as Acting Dean of the Cathedral for the duration of his imprisonment. Continuing his account of those wartime years, Dad related the following:

DC: Hence, before his final internment and for administrative convenience, he divided the diocese into three sections — Tamil, Chinese and English — and he put me in charge of the English section. I welcomed this decision. Rev P I S Baboo was made head of the Tamil Section and Rev Yip Cho San was made head of the Chinese Section, a sort of triumvirate. It did not work very well and eventually we went our separate ways. I looked after the English work without difficulty and the Chinese section, through Rev Yip Cho San used to come to me for advice.



Petrol ration book.

St. Andrew's Cathedral,
Syonan,
28th Mar. 1943. ...D.

My dear.....

During the time that I am hindered from fulfilling my episcopal duties in the Diocese I shall be happy in my confidence of your faithful devotion to your duties for I have rejoiced in the knowledge of so much good work done by you through God's blessing during the past years. I have only one urgent reminder - All that we are and all that we have belong to God - He has the first claim on our life - We are His people. This is not an easy faith to keep when so many demands are made upon us but the love of Christ constraineth us and casteth out all fear.

It may be that another Bishop will be appointed in my place - If that Bishop is duly consecrated according to the rites and ceremonies of the Anglican Church or any church in full communion with our church, (for example, Nippon Seikokwai or Cheng Hua Sheng Kung Hui) I bespeak for that Bishop your devotion and loyalty and canonical obedience.

If such an appointment is not made or until such time as it is made, I ask you to accept loyally the following appointments which I have made:-

- The Rev. Dr. D.D. Chelliah - Honorary Acting Dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral.
 - The Rev. Yip Cho Sang - Honorary Acting Commissary for Chinese Work throughout the Diocese.
 - The Rev. P.I.S. Baboo - Honorary Acting Commissary for Tamil Work throughout the Diocese.
 - The Rev. Yeh Hua Fen - Honorary Acting Assistant Chaplain St. Andrew's Cathedral.
 - The Rev. J.T.N. Handy - Acting Honorary Priest, St. Barnabas Church, Katong, Syonan.
 - The Rev. Dong Bing Seng - Acting Honorary Priest. Paul's Church, Paya Lebar, Syonan.
- Tamil Work will also include work in other Indian languages.
The Chinese Work in charge of Rev. Yip Cho Sang and the Tamil Work

The document from Bishop John Leonard Wilson appointing Rev Dr D D Chelliah as Honorary Acting Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, upon his internment by the Japanese. (page 1 of 2)

In charge of the Rev. P.I.S. Baboo will be autonomous, but these two Commissaries will be free to refer to the Honorary Acting Dean of the Cathedral their problems and seek, if necessary, his advice which he will only be too willing to give.

Even though it has been necessary to divide the work of the Diocese into different sections for the purposes of administration, the unity of the Diocese must not be lost sight of. There are bound to be matters of common interest and problems requiring common solution for the whole Diocese. To deal with them it is proposed to constitute a Council of Co-ordination, consisting of the Honorary Acting Dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral, the two Commissaries, the Diocesan Secretary and Treasurer and lay representatives duly elected on an all Malain basis. More details about this Council will be sent to you as soon as possible by the respective Heads of Administration. In all matters relating to your work please look to them for guidance and help which they will be only too ready to give.

May God Almighty bless us with His Holy Spirit keep us ever steadfast in His Faith, free from sin and safe from danger. May He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, and love to unite us now and for evermore.

Affectionately your bishop,

John Leonard Wilson

Continuation of the document from Bishop John Leonard Wilson appointing Rev Dr D D Chelliah as Honorary Acting Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, upon his internment by the Japanese. (page 2 of 2)

The Bishop ordained Mr J T N Handy and Mr Guok Kuo Moh as deacon and priest at the same service. This was most unusual but Bishop Wilson did this as a matter of expediency as all the colonial Anglican clergy would be in internment. He even advised the local clergy to accept a Japanese Bishop if one was appointed!

He told me just before he was interned that he would at least save the other two divisions if the English-speaking Section was unduly influenced by the Japanese. I did not quite know what he meant by that statement just before he went into Changi Prison. If I agreed to whatever changes the Japanese wanted, the other two could not be left unaffected. If they wanted to do anything with the Church, they would take over all the three units, and not just one unit. In practice, it was the opposite that happened; there was more disapproval (on the part of the government) of the English-speaking congregations than of the Chinese or Indian.

My first encounter with the Japanese was interesting. I was driving along Selegie Road with my wife on our way to the Cathedral for a service, when a Japanese officer spotted us near the Cathay Theatre (as it was known at that time), and asked me: "Where is St Andrew's Cathedral?" I told him: "I'm going there myself, you can come along with me." So he followed behind my car in his. I did not know at that time that he was a Christian who belonged to the Nippon Seikokai, the Anglican church in Japan. Later, I discovered that he was Lieutenant Andrew Ogawa, a senior officer of the occupying forces who was subsequently promoted to the rank of Captain. My first official contact with him was some time later. He was in charge of the Ministry of Education and Religion.

Captain Ogawa sent for three teachers, Mr E V Davis, Mr J M Dorairaj and me for a meeting to discuss how to reorganize the schools. We gave him suggestions and he gave instructions based on these, through the Municipal Department after it was organized. I think Mr Mamoru Shinozaki was in charge. During the war, some of the school buildings were used for semi-military purposes and some schools had to move to other buildings. St Andrew's students, for instance, had to have their classes held in the Portuguese Roman Catholic School, St Anthony's Boys' School, and I was put in charge. Rev R K S Adams, the

Principal, and the Chaplain, Rev A C Parr, were not free. Adams was running the MAS and Parr was the Chaplain to the volunteers. Schools were all closed after the fall of Singapore but were reorganized as soon as possible, and most of the teachers were appointed to their old schools. Ogawa had been advised to reopen as many schools as possible in their own buildings and with their old principals wherever possible. He left it to Mr Shinozaki to appoint the principals and select the buildings. The local staff were, as far as I know, anxious to be re-employed without undue delay.

I worked with Mr Shinozaki through Captain Ogawa. Later on, I was taken into his department to assist him regarding religious matters. Mr Dorairaj who had been the Personal Secretary to Dr Winstedt, the former Director of Education, assisted Mr Shinozaki on educational matters. The one who was actually assisting Mr Shinozaki to run the schools was Mr E V Davis. He was inspector of schools.

I was in charge of collecting information for Captain Ogawa on religious matters, i.e. churches, mosques and temples. For example, I had to make a list of churches and all their property as well as details on temples and mosques — just purely for information. They were not requisitioned at all, to be fair to the Japanese. They just wanted a list of these properties and the strength of their congregations. The Roman Catholics had the most accurate details about their congregations and they were very prompt in their response. They were very careful in keeping records indicating the number in the congregation of each church, whereas we, others, could not do that so accurately. The Roman Catholics were very responsive on such matters. Then the authorities wanted a list of church property. We were afraid that they might be requisitioned. Some of the churches were used for military purposes: Wesley Church at Fort Canning was not functioning at all. The Presbyterian Church in Orchard Road was also taken over for use as offices or something. As far as the Anglican church was concerned, the Bishop's house at Bishop's Gate was taken over for residential purposes. While in the Department of Religion, I carried out the directives of Captain Ogawa regarding religious matters.

Having been in America and a Professor of Rykkyo University in Japan, Captain Ogawa had liberal views and

**UNITED SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS
IN
ST. ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL
Whit Sunday, May 24th 1942 A.D.**

Hymn	-	-	"Come gracious Spirit Holy Dove."
Thanksgiving and Penitence	-	-	Rev. S. C. Cheng.
Hymn	-	-	"Our blest Redeemer."
Bible Reading	-	-	The Acts Chap. 2, 1—21.
(a) Tamil	-	-	Rev. S. Thevathasan.
(b) Hokkien	-	-	Rev. Hong Han Keng.
(c) English	-	-	Capt. Ogawa.
Hymn	-	-	"All Hail the power."
Intercession	-	-	Dr. Chia Boon Leong.
Hymn	-	-	"The Church's one foundation."
Address	-	-	Rt. Rev. J. L. Wilson.
Hymn	-	-	"Onward Christian Soldiers."
Blessing	-	-	Rt. Rev. J. L. Wilson.

This Service is organised by the Federation of Christian Churches in Malaya.

Jits & Co., Ltd., 96, Robinson Road, Singapore.

Programme for United Service of Christian Witness at St Andrew's Cathedral in May 1942.
Captain Andrew Ogawa, a Japanese officer, also took part in this Service.

was always fair. As far as Christian services were concerned, he was really very helpful. He allowed them to be carried on as before except that sermons were prohibited for some time. When sermons were allowed again, one or two Japanese officers were usually in the congregation to find out what was being preached. Those who faithfully preached only the gospel had nothing to fear.

Bishop Wilson and some other colonial clergy who were on parole for a little while before being interned, benefited from Captain Ogawa's thoughtfulness, too. Ultimately, however, these clergymen were probably imprisoned because it was feared that if they interacted too freely among the locals, they might stir up anti-Japanese feelings. They did not want any influence to undermine that of the Japanese.

It was Captain Ogawa who told me that he would like to see all the Christian churches working as one. He wanted to deal with them collectively rather than individually. The Federation was supposed to be the link between the churches and the administration. I called together all the leaders of the various churches and Captain Ogawa addressed us on the advantages of working together. He stressed that the Japanese did not want to deal with individual churches. Though he had some suggestions as to how a Federation of Christian Churches could function, he left the actual formation to us. Generally, the leaders were positive about this idea. Moreover, they did not want to incur the wrath of the Japanese and risk the closure of the churches.

Working in the Department of Religion, I was able to act as an intermediary for both sides. Some of the minor denominations were not in favour of the Federation as they felt that they were the only true followers of Christ but the consensus of opinion was that Christians should unite and the Federation became the link between the administration and the churches.

The Roman Catholics, under Bishop Devals, also initially responded positively to the Federation. However, they gradually withdrew. Their reason for this was that they would have to get permission from the Vatican or Macau before they could join. Under wartime circumstances, this was clearly difficult. Captain Ogawa who seemed to understand their situation, allowed them to withdraw.

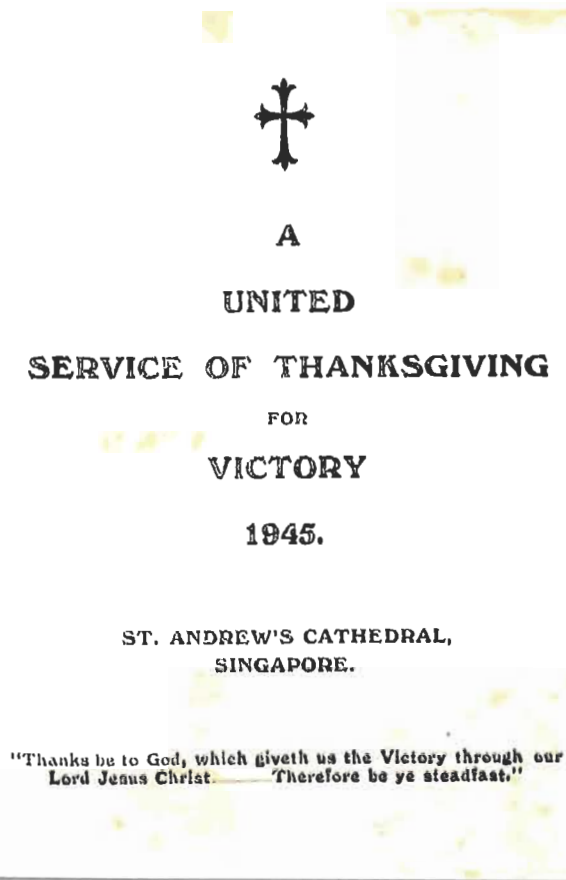
Our main objectives in supporting the formation of the Federation in April 1942 were to:

- 1) Express Christian opinion on public questions;
- 2) Organize social services in various forms with the help and guidance of government when necessary;
- 3) Represent the needs of the Christian community to the authorities concerned;
- 4) Unite evangelistic efforts;
- 5) Progressively realize union through workshops; and
- 6) Work for one united church.

The following were the elected officers. I was elected President of the Federation and Dr Chia Boon Leong, the Vice President. Rev S M Thevathasan of the Methodist church was the Secretary and Treasurer. Bishop J L Wilson who was on parole was the Chairman of the Union Committee and Mr A K Isaac, also an Anglican, was the Chairman of the Social Welfare Committee. It was supported very much by Captain Ogawa. I did not know whether the Japanese government liked it very much or not but he was really enthusiastic about it.

There were many combined services. We held services at the Cathedral and members from other denominations would come to attend them. It was an ecumenical move. Sometimes we had combined services in other churches also. We worshipped together. That was the beginning of real ecumenism in Singapore. Since my Penang days, I had worked closely with both the Methodist and Anglican churches and was already a strong believer in ecumenism. The idea of the Federation appealed to me. It was a good idea for the Christians to join together to relieve each other's sufferings and help one another to cope with the new administration.

I was between four and seven years old during the Japanese Occupation of Singapore. I remember Dad taking us to church every Sunday. For a time, we used to travel by bus, because our car had to be sold as finances were very low. When Rev Hayter was interned, Dad was allowed to use his car. Under Father's care, the Cathedral was open for worship daily. He frequently walked to the Cathedral and I remember that he even used to walk from our home



Thanksgiving for Victory!

in Serangoon to as far as Tiong Bahru, to comfort and encourage the parishioners.

Christmas stands out very clearly in my memory, especially the Christmas Eve Watch Night services. The Cathedral used to be full. Usually, I would fall asleep quite early in the service but when I heard the combined choir sing the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*, I would wake up with a thrill of excitement. It seemed to me that that must have been how the angels sounded on that first Christmas night, bringing glad tidings to those humble shepherds so many years ago.

Aunty Roh, Mother's youngest sister, used to sing in the Cathedral choir. Jonathan, who had the good soprano voice of a young boy of his age, sometimes sang solo parts. Besides the *Messiah*, at other festivals, the choir even presented lively renditions of Haydn's *Creation* and Stainer's *Crucifixion*. Mr G O

Daniel used to conduct the choir. Mrs Mercy Rajah and Miss Lim Bek Neo used to play the organ. All churches belonging to the Federation of Christian Churches took part in these services. Interestingly, ecumenism in this part of the world grew out of the need for the occupying army to keep the Christians under control!

DC: The Federation created opportunities for a good relationship between the administration and the public, particularly Christians, who were able to form a united front in matters affecting Christians as a whole. As Wesley Methodist Church had been closed down, the Methodists generally worshipped at the Cathedral. There was once a rumour that the Japanese wanted us to hang the picture of Tenno Heiko (His Majesty, the Emperor) in the churches at the same height as the cross. We were prepared to make representation to the authorities but thankfully they never asked us to do that.

The Federation was anxious that the military should not interfere with Christian worship or liturgy. However, in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, there are specific references to British royalty. Thus, the Anglicans were told to score out all references to British royalty. Thankfully, they did not ask us to burn the prayer books! Neither did the Japanese direct how the offending words were to be obliterated. They just did not want to see them in the prayer books. I kept a few of the Books of Common Prayer. Though for them royalty should naturally be Japanese royalty, they did not instruct the Christians to pray for their royalty.

All policies regarding worship were formulated by the Department of Religion without consulting local religious leaders, though Captain Ogawa would sometimes consult me on their implementation. It was assumed by the Japanese that the Christians were mostly pro-British not so much because of political reasons but because the Gospel was brought to this part of the world by British missionaries. And as a rule, the headquarters of the different denominations were in Europe or America, so they presumed that the Christians would be loyal to them. In Japan, they had no such problems because the Christian churches were indigenous in Japan. Through

the Department of Religion, the government had an official connection with the churches in Japan.

The Japanese did not want the pulpit to be used as a means of propaganda against them and their regime. Initially, preaching was allowed under their watchful eyes but it was subsequently prohibited. Once, Captain Ogawa asked me to investigate a complaint against a certain clergyman but it turned out that there was nothing to it. However, Captain Ogawa warned that if any complaint was found to be true, he would close down the church.

Suddenly, we were told that the Federation had to close down! By that time, Captain Ogawa had been transferred to Sumatra. His successor, Mr Watanabe, was a very cultured man, much older. He came to me and said: "Mr Chelliah, the Federation must stop at once." They did not even give us time to wind it up. With very great regret, we had to do so. Mr Richard Lim Chuan Hoe, a lawyer and lay supporter of the Federation, actually burst into tears when it was announced at a meeting that we had to close down straight away. We had collected money and fed people in need. All this had to come to an end within less than a year!

The main task of the Christians belonging to the Federation had been to promote good relationships and understanding among the denominations, to promote the ecumenical spirit and do welfare work, too. As there was a shortage of food, plots of land, even in the Cathedral grounds, were given to those members of the congregation who wanted to plant crops like tapioca. The Federation had organized social welfare services at four centres mainly attached to churches, and Mr Shinozaki had given quite a lot of help in setting these up, often providing cash and provisions.

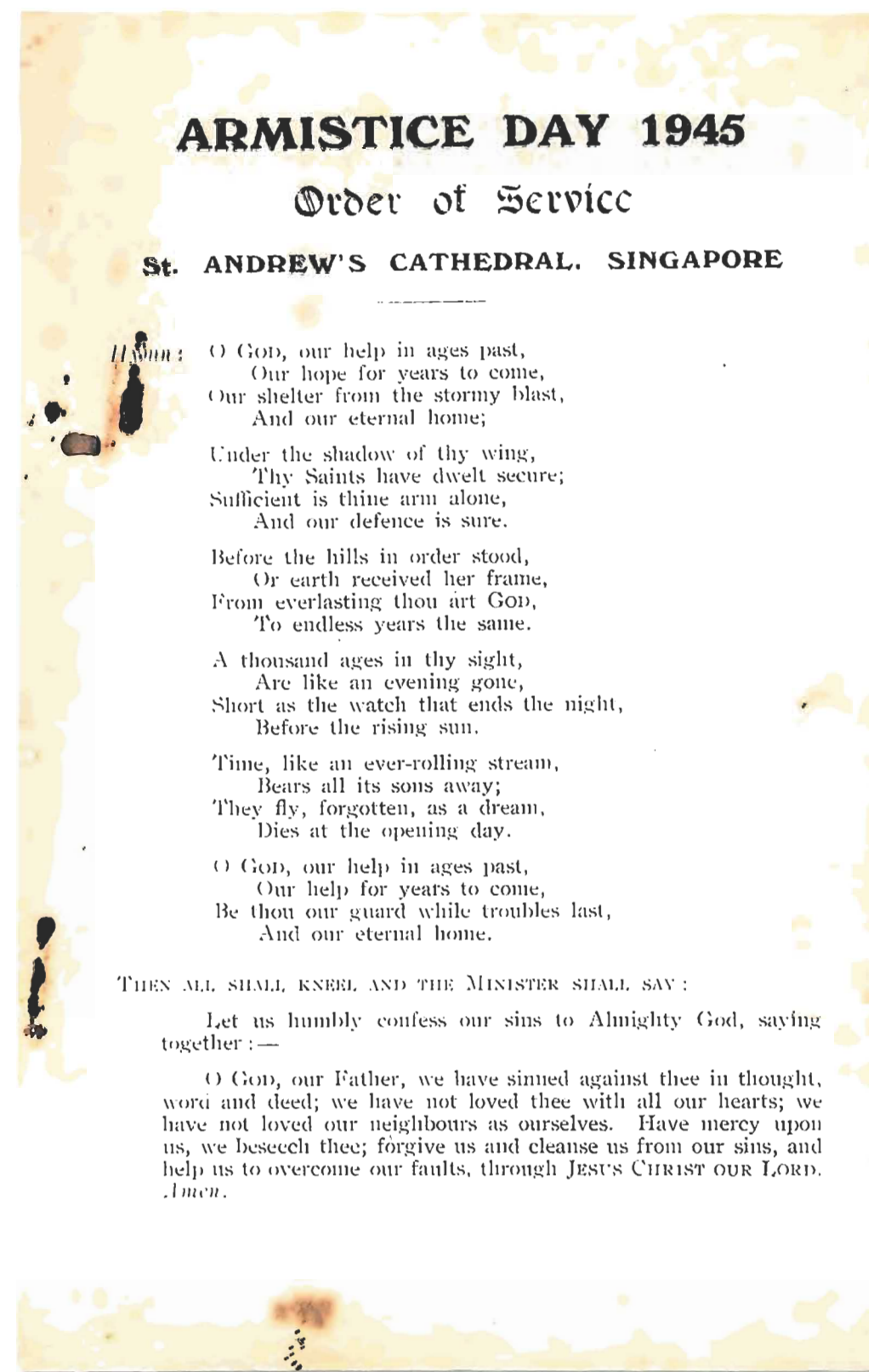
We had different centres in Katong and other places. Mr Arthur Isaac, who had been in the co-operative movement under the British, had been very helpful as was Mr Tan Syn Watt of Cycle and Carriage. The Japanese government had even given grants for the distribution of food and cash. We sent two people, one the Rev S S Pakianathan of the Methodist church, and the other Mr K T Alexander, the Secretary of the Anglican Diocese, to go upcountry to spread the idea of the Federation and also to see that there was no clash between Methodists and

Anglicans and other churches. That is the sad thing about Christians. They do not all work together though they all believe in Christ.

All this had to come to an end after just one year! Perhaps the Japanese were disturbed by the success of the Federation. The Christians were getting closer together and the occupying administration may have thought that this could work against their interests. In any case, it was, for the church, a very worthwhile wartime experience. It was a good idea for the Christians to join together in a Federation and relieve the sufferings of the needy and help them to be content with the administration. I gave my wholehearted support to it. Whomsoever I had invited responded very well even though ecumenism was still very new. The Federation created opportunities for a good relationship between the administration and the public, particularly Christians, and formed a united front in matters affecting the Christians as a whole.

After the closure of the Federation, the churches carried on as before its formation. It appeared that ecumenism that had just taken root might wither away. Each denomination was asked to make its senior priest or pastor responsible to the government. We had our own organization. I helped other Anglican churches whenever they needed help. I took on the responsibility of ensuring that the Anglican churches continued to practice ecumenism as far as possible. A senior man, the Rev Dong Bing Seng, was the correspondent or liaison officer between the Government and our particular denomination, sending out circulars as directed by the administration. Rev Yeh Hua Fen was appointed to assist me. Besides the Sunday services, I also conducted daily worship at the cathedral and looked after the spiritual needs of leprosy patients at Trafalgar Home in Yio Chu Kang.

Though the Federation did not exist any longer, important precedents had been set. One of these was that the Anglicans welcomed all baptized Christians of any other denomination to receive Holy Communion at Anglican churches. As a rule, the Anglicans had been strict on the exclusiveness of this Holy Sacrament and only confirmed Anglicans had been allowed to partake of the bread and the wine during Holy Communion Service. It is an exclusive sacrament, even among Angli-



"O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come".
Opening hymn for the service of thanksgiving, Armistice Day 1945.

SONG SERVICE
ST. ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL
 Friday, June 29th, 1945, A.D., 6 P.M.

1. Processional Hymn—
 "YE WATCHERS AND YE HOLY ONES"
2. Sermon and Opening Prayers.
3. Anthem by combined choir—
 "THE HEAVENS ARE TELLING THE GLORY OF GOD"
4. Anthem by Kampong Kapor Methodist Church Choir—
 "LIFT UP YOUR HEADS"
5. Anthem by Seventh Day Adventist Church Choir
 "AWAKENING CHORUS"
6. Congregational Hymn—
 "ALL PEOPLE THAT ON EARTH DO WELL, SING TO THE LORD
 WITH CHEERFUL VOICE"
7. Anthem by Paya Lebar Methodist Church Choir—
 "SEEK YE THE LORD"
8. Psalm by St. Andrew's Cathedral, St. Hilda's Church, and St. Paul's
 Church Choirs—
 PSALM 24 "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL THAT
 THEREIN IS"
9. Congregational Hymn—
 "O WORSHIP THE KING ALL GLORIOUS ABOVE"
(The alms, collected during the singing of this hymn, will be devoted to charity)
10. THE BLESSING.
11. Anthem by combined Choir—
 Chorus—"HALLELUJAH"
(The congregation will stand during the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus).

More songs of Praise and Thanksgiving for peace, June 1945.

cans. The Communion Service is, put simply, repeating what Christ did on the eve of His Crucifixion. With the dissolution of the Federation, we were left to ourselves, and we were free to co-operate with other Christians as much as we wanted.

The new Director of Religion was Mr Watanabe and he carried on as before except that there was no Federation. In British colonies and in Britain itself, there is no Ministry of Religion but there is one in Japan and they started one here, too. This Ministry was actually made up of two sub-branches — Religion and Education. Education was left to the Municipality, for some time under Mr Shinozaki for the day-to-day running but not in policy making. Later he became the Welfare Officer and did very well.

At the time that Singapore fell, Shinozaki had been in Changi Prison, convicted as a spy. Despite this, he did a lot of good work during the war. For instance, he donated cash and goods towards the Federation's welfare services. There was an interesting story about

him. Apparently when he was coming down from the Malayan Federation, he saw a woman who was almost naked. He instantly took off his coat and threw it to her. It was spontaneous. Not all the Japanese were bad, some were terrible but some were good.

Mr Watanabe was more of a professor and philosopher who was interested in religion. He wrote two books on Buddhism and asked me to edit them for him. He also wanted me to get different people to write on the beliefs and practices of the different religions in Singapore. He wanted something written for him on Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam and he was prepared to pay the writers. Some people whom I knew could do this, were willing to help but refused to accept any payment. Mr Watanabe decided to invite them to dinner at the Cricket Club to show them his appreciation.

It was apparent that some of the civilian officials of the Japanese regime had been educated in America and Europe. Indeed, some of these officials had even been

living and working in those countries. There was quite a mixture of the well-behaved and better educated ones. I think it was the Formosans who were very terrible. There were also some Koreans among them. In any case, we could not tell whether they were Japanese or Formosans or Koreans. The worst of them were in the police force.

The Japanese suspected that quite a number of Chinese citizens were communists. So they rounded them up and took them to the beach at Katong and

shot them. That was a most terrible and devastating crime against humanity! People and families who lost their loved ones were naturally bitter. Tragically, some local people suffered more at the hands of the Japanese through the hatred of local people themselves. If A had a grudge against B, it was enough for him to inform the authorities anonymously that "So and So" was listening to the English news bulletins or had English books. That was enough to have him arrested and tortured.

St. Andrew's Cathedral,
 Singapore

A UNITED
 SERVICE OF
 THANKSGIVING
 FOR VICTORY



12th September, 1946 at 5 p.m.

Christians united in thanksgiving for peace and victory, September 1946.

When Singapore fell, St Andrew's School became a food distribution centre and was under the charge of a lieutenant. He used to come down to my house to play English hymns on the piano. When I asked him where he had learnt them, because I had not thought that he was a Christian, he said, "In Sunday School." When they needed some utensils and so on, some local people, thinking that they could curry favour with him told him: "You can take them from such and such a house." But he said: "No, if I take them, I should pay for them." I thought that that was very commendable indeed. Some of the Japanese were good.

The Federation had been a success as far as our aims were concerned. That was why the Japanese probably got worried. They thought perhaps it might work against the interests of their government. That was the trouble! It was a very worthwhile experience that we had during the War. It was one of the good results of the Occupation.

Policy-making was completely in the hands of the Japanese. We were at the receiving end and were not asked to participate in the formulation of policies. Even Captain Ogawa, I think, had little to do with the formation of policies. It was all done at the top and handed down to the Department to be carried out.

At one stage, the Japanese wanted all the church property to be transferred to the Federation as the government wanted some sort of central authority to look after the properties. The local Christians were not in a position to do as they pleased as their colonial heads were in internment. In any case, with the disbanding of the Federation, this issue was no longer relevant.

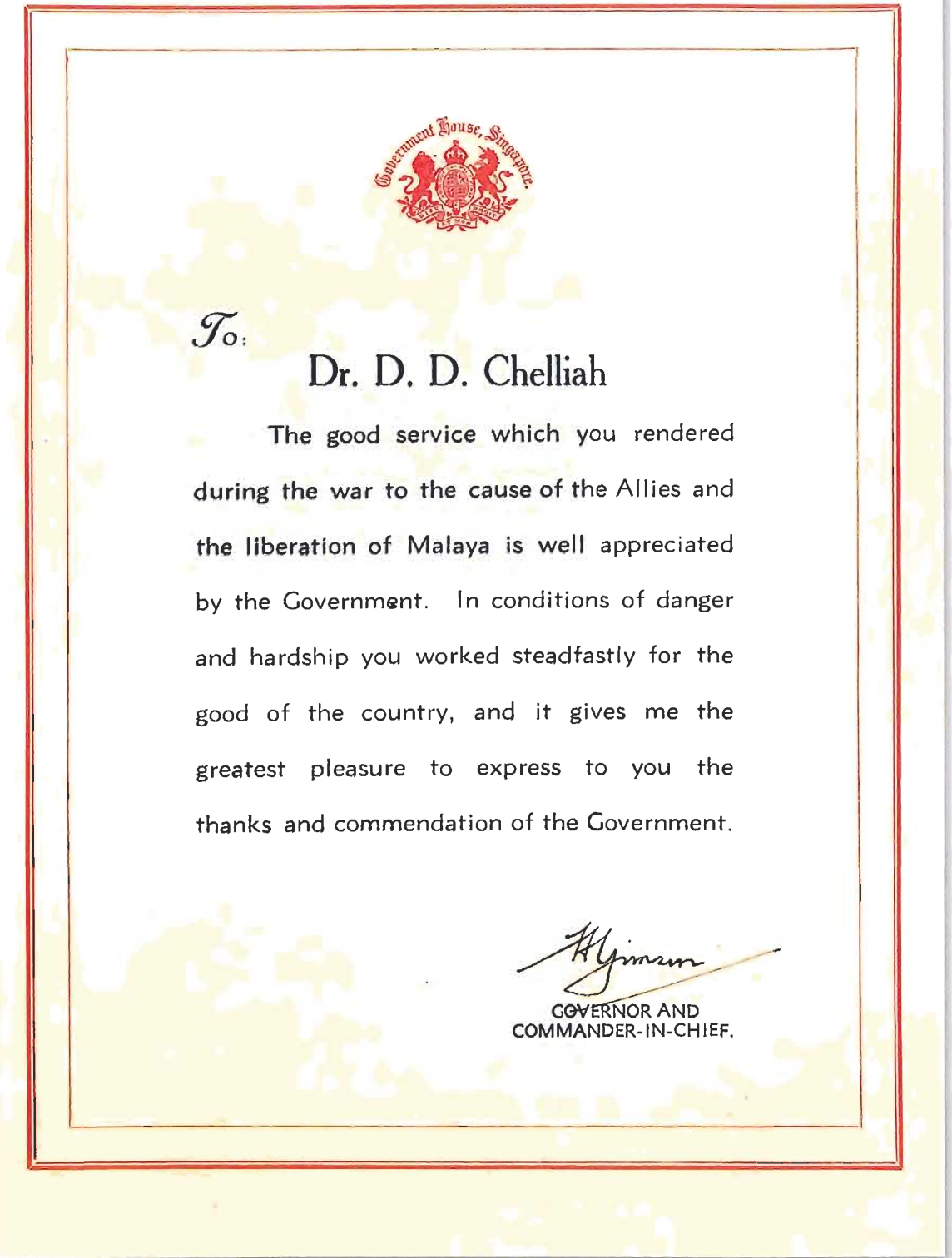
With the closure of the Federation, each denomination was asked to make its senior priest or pastor responsible to the government. We, attached to St Andrew's Cathedral, were not only able to support ourselves, but were also managed to help other Anglican churches in need. For instance, St Andrew's Cathedral was in a position to send regular help to Malacca where the church was unable to support itself. Occasional assistance was sent to other churches as well. We opened our doors to all Christians for worship with us. Likewise, the Rev P I S Baboo, the leader of the Tamil churches, helped those that needed help. It brought into focus the importance of

mutual responsibility and help. There were thus increased contacts between the churches in Singapore and Malaya during the war.

Prior to the war, the Bishop was the main link between the churches. He was Bishop of the whole diocese covering Singapore and what we now call West Malaysia; a few areas in Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam were also part of the diocese. We did meet at the Synod of the Anglican church but there was not much direct contact with each other. But during the war, we were anxious to assist each other from a genuine desire to help our churches which were not well off. It brought the Asian clergy into closer contact.

The different sectors of the Anglican church carried on, each in its own way. It was a sensible arrangement made by the Bishop — each language group to be responsible for its own affairs. Though the Bishop did not actually spell it out, it was understood that the Acting Dean should look after the interests of the other two sectors of the church, too. When Rev Yeh Hua Fen left for the Cameron Highlands, I was in need of help to conduct weekday and Sunday services, to work among the lepers in Trafalgar Home and so on. In all these, the Chinese sector helped me with wonderful co-operation. Whenever I asked them for assistance, particularly in maintaining services outside the Cathedral, they were always ready to help.

Before the war, each church paid its own priest. Thus the priest was not always able to get his salary in full at the end of the month. He had to make two or three trips to the Treasurer. I was a layman at that time and felt it very badly. During the Occupation, on the advice of some of us, Bishop Wilson started a central fund from which the priests were paid. The congregation paid whatever it could into this fund. It was a risky business because if the churches did not send their contributions, where would the Bishop get the money from? But they did co-operate very well on the whole. That was the material aspect. On other matters, it was more an individual affair. The main difference from the present day is the financial aspect. The churches became more and more self-supporting. That tendency still continues, the priests get paid from the diocese, so at the end of the month, every priest



Certificate of commendation presented to Dr Chelliah for services rendered to the Allies.

is assured of his salary. Asian priests were given more responsibility after the war than before it.

To many people, the Cathedral was very much a colonial church. Even today, we cannot get sufficient local clergy. (Note: This was recorded in 1973.) Only the Chinese-speaking churches have been served by local clergy. Before the war, the people who attended the Cathedral were mostly Europeans, merchants and civil servants. Local people began to take part more and more in worship during the war. It was a natural process because the Europeans were interned and local people were welcomed for worship at the Cathedral. Now the congregation at the Cathedral consists mostly of Asians.

On his internment in March 1943, Bishop Wilson appointed my Father as Acting Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral. In the Anglican church, it is the post next in seniority to the Bishop. Sometimes in a cynical mood, I think "Dad was a great actor!" At various stages of his life, he was good enough to be "Acting Dean", "Acting Principal" and the Archbishop's Commissary which was a sort of "Acting Bishop". However, due to the supremacy of those colonial masters and the colour of his skin, he was never confirmed in any of these positions. To my Father's eternal credit, and commitment to his work, he humbly accepted these injustices with grace and never showed any bitterness.

In his book, *Priest in Prison*, Canon Hayter pays tribute to Captain Ogawa for his efforts in keeping the churches open for regular worship in Singapore. Apparently in Malacca, Ipoh and many other places in Malaya and in Burma, churches had been destroyed or severely damaged by the Japanese army. The returning colonial clergy were surprised that the churches in Singapore had not been desecrated. Lord Louis Mountbatten sent a letter to Captain Ogawa commending him for this. Returning to Singapore on a British hospital ship from Medan in Sumatra, Captain Ogawa was met at the harbour by the Port Chaplain and by my Father. Canon Hayter says:

*"...Revd Dr D D Chelliah, who knew Ogawa well, had played such a prominent and leading part both in the life of the Church and of the schools in Singapore for the whole of the Japanese Occupation."*¹

In his message in the *Diocesan Digest of the Diocese of Singapore and Malaya* dated January 1967, Bishop Chiu Ban It wrote the following of my Father:

"Few men can equal the record of our beloved in Christ, Devasahayam David Chelliah, Doctor of Philosophy, Clerk in Holy Orders for the long and outstanding service which he has rendered to the diocese as teacher (1911-1961), priest (from 1940) and as administrator. There are few high posts in all the three capacities that Dr Chelliah did not occupy. Whether it was as teacher, headmaster, Diocesan Secretary for Schools, Honorary Priest, Vicar, Archdeacon or Vicar-General, he brought to it a wealth of experience and wisdom and occupied each post with distinction and honour.

"Early in 1966, however, Dr Chelliah himself announced that he intended to retire as Archdeacon of Singapore on December 31st 1966, in order that younger men who have proved themselves, might be able to share in the responsibility for the diocese. It was a most thoughtful and generous gesture and one which was consonant with his nature. We all realize what a difficult and onerous task it is to be Archdeacon of Singapore. Dr Chelliah has borne that burden since 1957, so we do appreciate and sympathize with his desire to lay down those duties. I know, however, that we would all want to remember him as Archdeacon, which he fulfilled so unstintingly, while we do not want to continue to impose upon him the burdensome duties. In order to do that and backed by advice from the highest authorities, I am making Dr Chelliah Archdeacon Emeritus as from January 1st 1967, because of his

1. John Hayter. *Priest in Prison*. Tynron Press, UK 1991, pp. 259 and 260.

Cathedral Church of St. Andrew
Singapore



INSTITUTION

of

THE REVEREND DEVASAHAYAM
DAVID CHELLIAH, O.B.E., Ph.D.

CANON OF SINGAPORE

as

ARCHDEACON OF SINGAPORE

by

THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF SINGAPORE

on

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25th, 1958 THE FEAST OF THE
CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL at 7.00 a.m.

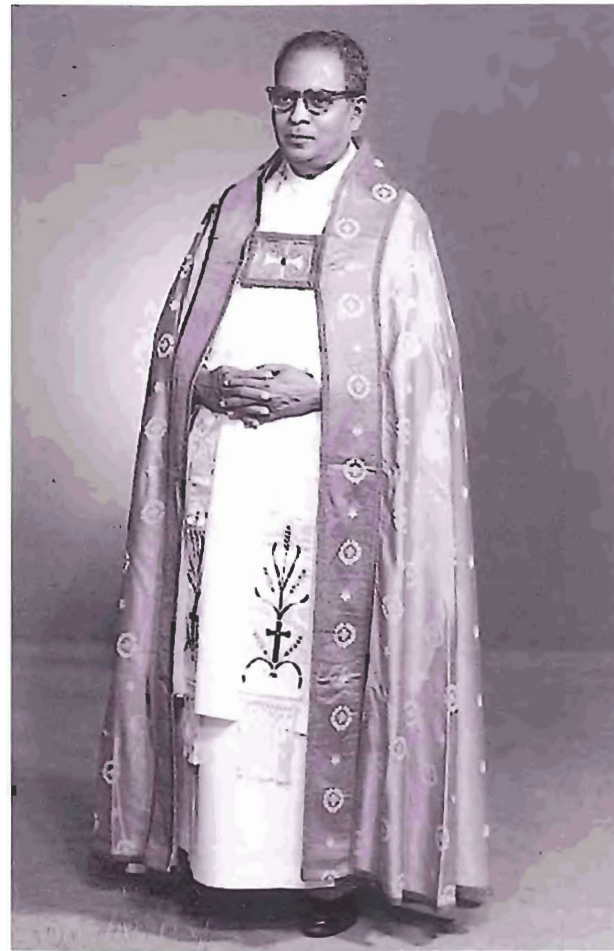
Please take away this Order of Service so that the prayers may be available for your personal use.

Cover for the Service proceedings at the Institution of Canon D D Chelliah as the first Asian Archdeacon of the Diocese of Singapore.

long and meritorious service to the Diocese. We can therefore continue to address him as Archdeacon Chelliah.

“Archdeacon Chelliah has magnanimously assured me that I may avail myself at any time of his wisdom and experience. I am grateful for that assurance. The Diocese will also not be losing the sage counsel, and help and advice which is his to give in our councils and Synod as Archdeacon Chelliah is continuing as Diocesan Secretary for Schools (Singapore) and also as Vicar of St Paul’s, Upper Serangoon.

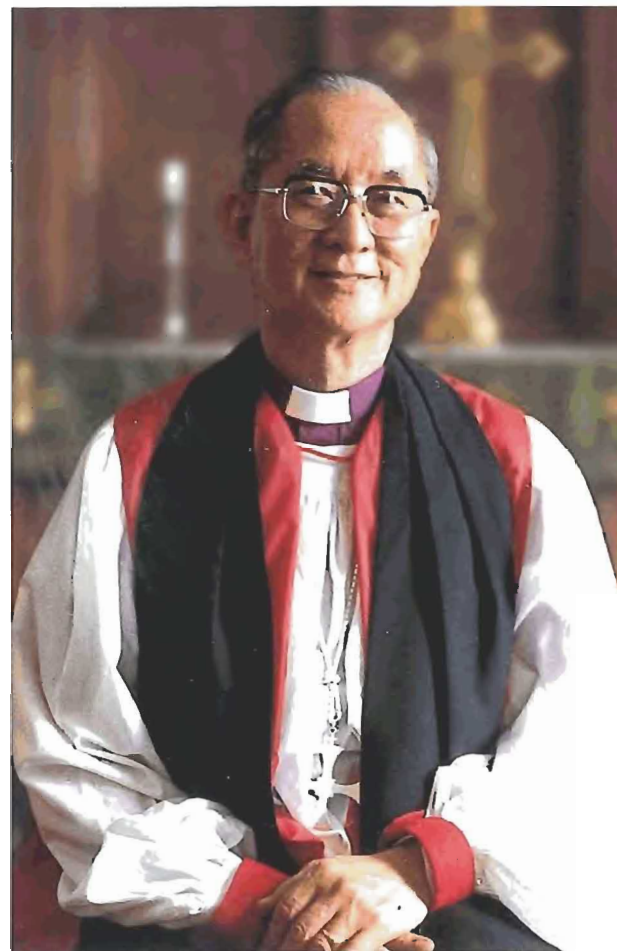
“During the Japanese Occupation from 1943-1946 as Acting Dean of St Andrew’s Cathedral appointed by Bishop J L Wilson, he ministered to an ecumenical congregation in the Cathedral and also helped in English-speaking parishes in Singapore. The



Ven Dr D D Chelliah.

Cathedral during his ministry was able to send help to struggling congregations outside Singapore. The older members of St Andrew’s Cathedral still remember with appreciation his services in the Cathedral in the darkest period in the history of Singapore.”

In January 1949, my Father was appointed an Honorary Canon of St Andrew’s Cathedral and on 25 January 1958, he was officially instituted as the first Asian Archdeacon of Singapore by Bishop Henry Wolfe Baines. At that time, the Archdeaconery of Singapore consisted of the parishes of Java and South Sumatra, as well as the states of Johor, Malacca and Negri Sembilan in Malaysia. Bishop Chiu Ban It, Singapore’s first Asian Bishop, conferred on my Father the honour of Archdeacon Emeritus in 1967. This title had never been used in Singapore before.



Rt Rev Chiu Ban It.



Bishop Henry Wolfe Bains conducting the official institution of Canon Chelliah as Archdeacon. Behind Ven D D Chelliah are Mr Lim Ewe Huat, Chancellor to the Diocese, Canon John Lee and Canon P I S Baboo.



Archdeacon Chelliah speaking at the Synod of the Diocese of Singapore and Malaya, 1961. Others in the picture include (left to right) Bishop Kenneth Sansbury, Canon P I S Baboo and Mr Lim Ewe Huat.